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Old Drugstores

Four of the drugstores in Bedford during my boyhood were much alike in layout and appearance — the fifth, Dr. Golliday's, was a typical apothecary shop of post Civil War days.

In the front windows of the four main drugstores, large show globes filled with colored water — one red, one blue or green — served as a trademark. They were as typical of the drugstore then as was the wooden Indian of the cigar store or the striped pole of the barber shop.

Customers entered each of these drugstores by a central doorway. Three of the stores had an ornate soda fountain on one side of the entrance and on the other a well-filled cigar case with a tip cutter and match dispenser on top. Gold labeled porcelain bottles of drugs occupied shelves along one side of each store, and the shelves on the other side held an amazing array of patent medicines with descriptive labels. Glass front display cases extended down each side of the store. These held a variety of toilet articles, brushes, perfumes in fancy bottles, stationery, soap, pens, razors, boxed candy, scissors, and other drug sundries.

Down the central aisles of three of the stores, several round-topped ice cream tables with spindly

wire legs accommodated four customers each for the new sensation — ice cream sodas and sundaes. The chairs had round wooden seats with wire legs and backs.

On one side near the back of each store was a wrapping counter with a roll of paper and a ball of twine in a beehive-shaped metal container. A prescription room where medicines were compounded extended across the back of each store separated from the store itself by a glass cabinet with a large mirror.

The prescription room was a fascinating place with its delicate box scales and weights, its mortars and pestles, measuring glasses and beakers, a cork reducing press, a bottle capper, a pill rolling machine, and a suppository mold. Rows of unfilled glass bottles of various sizes and empty pill boxes bearing the druggist's name lined the shelves above the prescription counter. Below the counter, tier upon tier of small drawers with marked handles held innumerable varieties of botanical plants, mineral salts, and other products used in compounding prescriptions.

Back of the prescription section, rolls of wallpaper in box-like compartments filled one side of a room, while gilt and wood molding for picture frames hung on pegs on the opposite wall. A work counter equipped with a cutter for trimming wallpaper and with tools for making picture frames occupied considerable space in this room. At the

rear of each store was a stockroom for incoming shipments.

The Dr. Golliday Drug Store

According to an old abstract as verified by John Dinges, Dr. Alfred M. Golliday purchased the west 42 ft. of lot 6, blk. 11, on Nov. 3, 1866. Here he built his one-story frame office and drugstore on the recent site of the State Savings Bank, and a one-story frame cabin on a spot which is now the back part of Fields Dad and Lad Clothing Store. He enclosed the lot, front and back, with a high board fence.

Dr. Golliday, a graduate of Rush Medical College, Chicago, opened his office and drugstore late in 1866, and during the next 25 years enjoyed a wide practice and large drug business. He accumulated a considerable sum of money, investing some in real estate and saving the rest. He owned the acreage now known as Bibbins Park where on Sundays he would take long walks chasing out boys who would hide in the woods there to tease him.

By the time we moved to Bedford in 1898, he had lost much of his medical practice; and his combined office and store had become an old cluttered-up apothecary shop. He still had a few cronies who every evening would sit around the stove in the middle of the store and discuss topics of the day with him, for he was one of the best educated men in Bedford at that time.

Dr. Golliday distrusted banks and at his death in April 1908 a total of \$42,448.54 in bills, gold coin, silver dollars, and fractional silver was found hidden in various places throughout the store. The silver and gold were carried across the street in buckets to the First National Bank, and most of the bills were so old that they had to be verified by the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C., before they could be accredited to the estate.

The Rockwell-Nelson Drug Store

This store was owned and operated by Robert Rockwell and Charles Nelson. It was started about 1880 and, because of the failing health of the owners, was sold to Dr. Henry Dunlavy in 1896. Mr. Rockwell had studied to become a pharmacist by reading books under Dr. M. C. Connett, and he in turn instructed the late C. N. Nelson, who began to work in the store at the age of 17. Charles Nelson, a Civil War veteran, spent several months in Andersonville prison, and suffered thereafter from inflammatory rheumatism. He found useful remedies for his ailment in his own store. Rockwell worked as a pharmacist at Lenox, Iowa, and Sheridan, Missouri, before going into business at Bedford. Although this store had changed owners before we moved to Bedford, it was still in existence in 1898 under the management of Dr. Henry F. Dunlavy.

The Dr. Dunlavy and H. A. Meek Drug Store

Tressie Dunlavy of Chicago writes me that her

father, who had been a member of the Rhoads-Remington Drug firm, moved from Bedford to Texas in the fall of 1893 on account of his health. Returning in 1896, he purchased the Rockwell-Nelson Drug Store on Court Street and established his office in the rear of the building. His son, Theron, and his son-in-law, George Walker, ran the store with the doctor serving as pharmacist.

Tressie relates that her father installed the first soda fountain in Bedford with a grand opening in May of each year and closing it in October for the winter. Theron Dunlavy made the ice cream and, according to Tressie and Lottie Taylor Gooding, the Dunlavy ice cream sodas and sundaes — price 10 cents — were the best anyone ever tasted.

About the time we came to Bedford (1898), Dr. Dunlavy moved his store to the building on the corner of Main and Court streets. Here Theron, who had studied pharmacy under his father and had passed the state examination, became a pharmacist, while the doctor maintained a suite of offices in the rear of the building. My father's grocery store was on the corner across the street west.

Shortly after the turn of the century (1901), Harry A. Meek purchased this drugstore and operated it until he sold the stock and fixtures and purchased a restaurant on Court Street in 1907. Harry Meek also made his own ice cream; and, once when I worked for him, I spoiled a batch by

spilling salt into the partly frozen cream when packing it. I also sold chocolates and bon bons for Harry Meek before shows started and between acts at Steele's Opera House.

The Rhoads-Remington Drug Store

Harry Rhoads and Charles Remington, both pharmacists, operated a large drugstore for several years. Their full-page ad in the "Special Edition of the Times Republican and the Bedford Daily Times," published in August 1893, stated that their store occupied all three floors of the corner building with a "full and complete line from the ground floor to the roof." They advertised "wall paper, drugs, paints, oils, stationery, books, and the largest music department in the country with the finest pianos and organs and musical instruments of all kinds."

"Dr. H. F. Dunlavy, physician and surgeon," the ad stated, "is a member of the firm and has his office in the store rooms where he answers calls at all times."

When we moved to town in 1898 the drugstore still occupied most of the building, and the Bell Telephone Exchange had quarters on the second floor; but the Joseph and Sperry Cigar Factory had taken over the third floor. This building and the Hotel Garland were the only three-story structures in Bedford, and it was an exciting adventure for boys to climb the long outside stairway and work at stripping tobacco leaves in the cigar fac-

tory. Many of us hated to see the third floor removed when John Tracy remodeled the building several years later as it took away a Bedford landmark.

The Harry Rhoads Drug Store

Shortly after the turn of the century, Harry Rhoads sold his interest in this store to Frank Bailey and opened his own drugstore a few doors north of the Hotel Garland. He installed all new fixtures, and, at the time, probably had the most up-to-date drugstore in Bedford. At his death in 1924, the pharmacy section of the store was discontinued, as none of his children had become pharmacists. His daughters, Hermia and Beryl, took over the business featuring books, magazines, stationery, wallpaper, and drug sundries, which they continue to do in the same location today. The fixtures, lights, and the store sign are the same as installed by their father. As a dedicated druggist, Harry Rhoads never purchased a soda fountain, preferring, as he said, "to run a drug store instead of an ice cream parlor."

The Remington and Bailey Drug Store

For boys in Bedford, this store was popular — as it, like the Dunlavy Drug Store, had installed a gleaming soda fountain with tasty ice cream sodas and sundaes at 10 cents each. It also featured a wide assortment of 5-cent weekly novels so popular among boys and young men during the 1890's and 1900's. Each week one window of this store

was filled with the latest issues of such favorites as *Nick Carter*, *Frank Merriwell*, *Old King Brady*, *Young Wild West*, *Frank Reade*, *Diamond Dick*, *Buffalo Bill*, *Liberty Boys of Seventy-Six*, and the *Log Cabin Library* — tales of Jesse and Frank James. Many boys were forbidden by parents to read these novels, but read them they did, secretly, in attics, in stables, in haymows, behind the woodshed, at school concealed inside a large geography, and in privies, with which Bedford was well supplied in those days before city water and sewers had been installed. Boys would exchange copies of these publications, and John Swap was always willing to loan back numbers from his stockpile of the *Nick Carter Weekly*.

*A. L. Bibbins, Druggist,
Book Seller, and Music Dealer*

For many years, the A. L. Bibbins Drug Store occupied the present site of Kenneth L. Moore's Western Auto Associate Store. A full-page ad by A. L. Bibbins in the 1893 "Special Edition of the Times Republican and the Bedford Daily Times" featured a picture of the owner and the store front. As a successor to Ramsey and Bibbins, the new owner listed himself as a "Druggist, Book Seller, and Music Dealer" and advertised "Picture Frames, Wall Paper, Jewelry, Holiday Goods, Art Materials and Warranted Adamantine Spectacles, Clough and Warren's Celebrated Grand Combination Organs, Estey Organs, and Knabe,

Solid Gold Rings Made without seam or joint, and of the very best quality of perfectly annealed gold, which make them wear smooth, and hold perfect color. Price less than poor Rings are usually sold for.

W. H. GOODING
JEWELER and Optician
Bedford, Iowa

A. L. BIBBINS
FOR
Drugs, Books and Wall Paper.
Bedford, Iowa. Bedford Phone, No. 87.

WE WILL CONVINCCE YOU
That our stock of goods is the best in Taylor county, and our prices correct. Please call, examine goods and get prices before buying.
E. L. WINTERMUTE,
Bedford, Iowa. Second door west of Citizens Bank.

Now You Are Married, Young Man
We can furnish your home neatly, sweetly, cheaply and completely.
WE CAN SAVE YOU MONEY—COME AND SEE US
STEPHENS & TAYLOR
Hardware and Furniture Bedford, Iowa

For First Class
Groceries The place to trade is at the old Reliable Firm of **J. H. Roe**
Highest Market Price Paid for Country Produce Bedford, Iowa

Millinery —The Best, the Latest, the Most Stylish, the Cheapest.
No trouble to show goods.
McCloud Millinery Parlors
East Main Street Bedford, Iowa

Did You Ever Notice? The BEST Goods are always the cheapest. Do not buy a shabby machine-made harness—go to a responsible firm, where you get first class goods and workmanship.
O. D. LAIRD, Main Street, Bedford, Iowa

Fischer, McCammon, Estey, and Sterling Pianos."

"Granny" Bibbins, as he was often called, was a chemist and pharmacist who compounded many of the medicines he sold. At an early date, he installed a soda fountain. A shrewd businessman, he made a sizeable fortune in the drug business; and, after his store burned during the 1910-11 holiday season, he owned and operated the Hotel Garland for a time. Bibbins Park, formerly Dr. Golliday's Timber, was a gift to the people of Bedford by a provision in his will.

The late Jim Gilchrist, as a boy, worked in the Bibbins Drug Store, and passed on to his son, Henry, many stories of his experiences among the pills and potions. The following story is one of Henry's favorites:

During my father's days in high school in Bedford he earned money to help with his expenses by clerking for "Granny" Bibbins during his school vacation, particularly at Christmas time. Ed Graff, a contemporary to my father, was another young man who also helped Mr. Bibbins in this capacity. One of the nearly innumerable remedies the Bibbins Store stocked was whiskey, kept and dispensed for medicinal purposes only. It is my recollection Dad said the sale of it under any other circumstances was prohibited by Iowa law. As a matter of fact, I think even selling it under a requirement as worthy as this was sometimes brought into doubt. Anyway, "Granny" Bibbins kept it, and it was a highly popular item. It was delivered in wood barrels and as an illustration of Mr. Bibbins' en-

terprise, two qualities were stocked. An inferior and much cheaper distillation was known as "rot gut." The other and more expensive was called "good whiskey." Those customers who required heavy and frequent dosages of either of these panaceas carried their own bottle with them.

One afternoon a citizen of rural Bedford, whose name need not be mentioned here, approached my father near the rear of the store, pressed his empty bottle into the young man's hand and whispered the request that it be filled with the good whiskey. Dad dashed down the stairs into the basement only to discover the barrel of good whiskey was empty. A fresh delivery was sitting there but getting it mounted onto the cradle and preparing it for use was a matter of several minutes and considerable effort. He had heard it said few, if any, people could distinguish one whiskey from another, anyway. So he elected the easy way out, filled the bottle with "rot gut," shamelessly collected the customer's money and rang it up. That evening, as he was on his way to supper, he encountered his whiskey customer on the street. The gentleman was by now much relieved of whatever had been ailing him. He stopped my father, put his arm around his neck and said, "By golly lad, that sure was good stuff you sold me."

The Patent Medicine and Bitters Era

The patent medicine craze and the bitters drinking era in the drug business came to an end during my boyhood in Bedford with the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of June 30, 1906. Profits from the sale of Patent Medicines and Bitters Tonics with high alcoholic content were enormous between the end of the Civil War and 1906. The public responded to the advertised cures eagerly. During my boyhood Peruna was a favorite

tonic, and I used to enjoy a nip now and then from a bottle which my father kept on a shelf behind some cracker boxes in his grocery store.

H. Clifford Dougan, who has been a registered pharmacist for more than 50 years, furnished me with the following list of old-time patent medicines and the classic descriptions of cures promised:

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup — "For Babies Teething."

Kickapoo Indian Salve — "Composed of Pure Buffalo Tallow and Healing Extracts of Roots, Barks and Herbs gathered and specially processed by the Kickapoo Indians for this Ointment."

Kickapoo Indian Sagwa — (good for everything).

Warner's Safe Cure for Liver.

White's White Wonder Soap — "Made from Mexican Maw Root, Skin of the Giant Cactus and the Oil of the Cocoanut."

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, Ayer's Hair Tonic.

Dr. John Bull's Worm Candy.

Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound (for the ladies).

Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, Dr. D. Jayne's Vermifuge.

Frank M. O'Neil's TWELVE JUICES

A Compound Made From Natural Ingredients, Such as Roots and Herbs, which are gathered from the Hills, Valleys, Forests and Fields of Mother Nature and carefully blended together. A Natural Compound Which Tones, Cleanses and Purifies The Human System. Price \$1.25

KIRN'S KIDNEY TEA

A SURE CURE FOR Diabetes, Dropsy, Acute, Chronic and Inflammatory Conditions of the Kidneys, Inflammation of the Bladder, Too Frequent, Scanty and Painful

Urination, Jaundice, Biliousness, Malaria and All Irregularities of the Liver. Purifies the Blood, Strengthens the Stomach, Cures Constipation and Regulates the Bowels. Price 25c (imagine all that for a quarter)

EILERT'S DAY LIGHT FAMILY LIVER PILLS

For THE CURE of All Fevers, Liver Complaints, Dyspepsia, Impurity of the Blood, Jaundice, Pains in the Head, Breast, Side and Limbs, All Female Complaints, etc, etc. 25 cents.

ATHLOPHOROS PILLS

A CURE for ALL DISEASES arising from Vitiated Blood and General Debility, such as Dyspepsia, Nervous Debility, Salt Rheum, Blood Poisoning and Diseases Peculiar to Women. Full directions on wrapper. Price 50c.

DR. A. BOSCHÉE'S GERMAN SYRUP
OF TAR, WILD CHERRY, &c

A CERTAIN CURE for all Diseases of the Throat and Lungs, Whooping Cough and Croup. Warranted not only to HELP but to CURE CONSUMPTION!, if continued, where there is a constitution to work on. Price 75 cents.

Old Drugstore Restorations

With the shift of the drugstore today to a general merchandise emporium many people like to recall the earlier and simpler days of the drug business. Throughout the United States several old apothecary shop and drugstore restorations have been opened to the public. One of the best and most complete collections is the Pharmacy Museum at The University of Iowa College of Pharmacy in Iowa City.

Here the visitor may see old drugstore jars and

porcelain shelf bottles with gold decorations, cork presses, old mortars and pestles both stone and brass, window display globes of different sizes filled with colored water, pill-making machines and suppository molds, marble-base counter scales with assorted weights, beam scales, prescription-filling utensils, a large collection of old patent medicines, wire sponge baskets, ice cream soda glasses and pewter bases, oil extractors, marked containers for castor oil, quinine, asafetida, epsom salts, sulphur, camphor gum, and many common remedies, fancy perfume bottles, candy jars with glass tops; in fact, nearly everything found in an old-time drugstore.

Memories of the old-time drugstore, with its ice cream parlor tables and chairs, gleaming soda fountain complete with white marble counter and mirrored back bar and silver accessories, and odors of pungent herbs drew some 300 antique collectors to bid on the furnishings of an old drugstore being closed out at Maxwell a few years ago. Bidding was brisk and prices paid for some of the items by collectors were fabulous.

Visitors to Bedford's Centennial celebration in 1953 will recall H. Clifford Dougan's reconstruction of an "Olde Apothecary Shoppe" in a corner of the Bedford Rexall Drugs store. His display consisted of several of the items listed in the College of Pharmacy Museum collection. There was also an assortment of gone-but-not-forgotten ci-

gars, some of which were made in Bedford a half century or more ago. In addition, he displayed old Kodaks, red flannel lung protectors, and a fine assortment of old patent medicines. One feature of this exhibit was a keg of "Wahoo Indian Bitters" (\$2.95 per gallon) described as "A Splendid Spring Tonic but Good Any Time of Year."

Truly Bedford offered a full rich life during my boyhood. The old drugstores, the old grocery stores, the old livery barns, the old blacksmith shops, and the old opera house all contributed to my golden memories of that era.

BRUCE E. MAHAN